

TRINITY CHARGE--THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
 Ralph C. Link, Pastor
 Trinity Church, New Bloomfield 9:00 A.M.
 Christ Church, Duncannon 10:30 A.M.

THE ORDER OF WORSHIP December 31, 1972

The Organ Prelude
 *The Hymn of Praise 120
 *The Call to Worship
 *The Prayer of Confession (Unison)
 O Thou who art more ready to forgive than we are to confess, we come before Thee in the closing hours of this year acknowledging our failures to be true disciples of Thy Son Jesus Christ. We have followed our own selfish ways rather than walking with Him who is the true way. We have come to Thee for grace without being gracious to our brothers. In the world we have pursued human interests rather than witnessing to Thy will for man. Forgive us O Lord, and help us amend our ways in the year to come; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.
 *The Kyrie
 *The Assurance of Pardon
 The Scripture ---- II Corinthians 5:11-19
 *The Gloria Patri
 The Anthem (Trinity)
 The Pastoral Prayer
 The Choral Response (Trinity)
 The Announcements
 The Receiving of Tithes and Offerings
 *The Doxology
 *The Offering Prayer and Lord's Prayer
 The Hymn of Meditation 123
 The Sermon----"Those Were The Days!"
 The Sermon Prayer
 *The Hymn of Response 126
 *The Benediction
 *The Threefold Amen
 *The Postlude

GENERAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

Bible Study will begin again on Wednesday January 3, at 7:30 P.M. in Christ church Duncannon.

The Confirmation Class will resume again on Saturday January 6, at 9:00 A.M.

On Saturday evening January 6, a nationwide television broadcast will be made concerning Key 73. All members, families and friends are urgently requested to watch this program. Check your papers for the time and channel. This program should take precedence over football, All In The Family or any other program in the lives of our church people. Please Watch it!

We will observe the Sacrament of Holy Communion in both churches next Sunday January 7.

TRINITY CHURCH ANNOUNCEMENTS

The flowers on the altar are placed in loving memory of Mrs. Carrie Darlington by her daughter Madeline.

Next Sunday evening January 7 at 7:30 P.M. a community tree burning will be held in the parking lot of the Lutheran Church. There will be a short service with carols and Scripture, followed by fellowship in the Parish House. Plan now to attend.

CHURCH WOMEN MEET THURS. 7:30
ELECTION BRING NEEDLES, THREAD,
24 PRESENT LAST WEEK AT LUTH.
ENVELOPES IN BACK

"Those Were The Days!"

NEW YEAR
(BUILDING & GROWING)

Text: Revelation 21:5 "Behold I make all things New!"
II Corinthians 5:17 "Therefore if anyone is in Christ; he is a
new creation; the old has passed away, behold the new has come."

REVELATION

"Those were the days my friend, we thought they'd never end,
We'd sing and dance forever and a day." These are the
words of a song of recent vintage, and they perhaps express the desire
or wish of all generations. When we look at our children and see them
at play, carefree and having fun, we perhaps sometimes ponder our own
childhood and wish that we could relive some of those happy moments of
the past. But as the song tells us, "Once we've passed its portals,
we may never return again," and so we are reminded that once childhood is
past, it is gone and must be forgotten.

Or we relive some of the moments of the people who lived
around the beginning of the century by looking in an old Sears Roebuck
catalog from the early 1900's. We can look in the book and pick out all
sorts of amusing things from old hand driven farm machinery, to some of
THE very funny clothing worn by both men and women.

Many people today will tell us very readily that there was
nothing like the "good old days." Which in some respects may be true,
but in others not so true. In a few more hours we will be able to
look back to the year 1972, and think of its trials and errors, its
triumphs and tragedies, its good days and its bad days and will we
think of it with that nostalgia associated with other times past?
In all fairness I think not, and the reason is simply because there
will not be woven into our memories other years and other memories that
let us compare its good times and overlook the bad times. We as humans
have a tendency to overlook many things when we look into the past.
We only see the good and sunny days, and we play down or forget al-
together the days of turmoil, frustration, grief or ~~frustration~~ anxiety.

It may be simple and easy for an individual to slip into the past and to relive old memories and familiar and more happy times, but an entire age or generation of people cannot do this. We cannot return to the past and relive those so called, "Good Old Days." Neither can the church or people of the church return to those, "Good Old Day.² We must constantly push forward and onward. Paul tells us, "Therefore if anyone is in Christ; he is a new creation; the old has passed away the new has come." In others words, this is a new day, a new era, a new age. We must live in this time, in this place and become new creatures in Christ. When we are accepters and followers of Jesus Christ, we put on the new being, the new self. All of the past is just that, the past, and we must start living the new life.

We also read in the book of Revelation in the ^{21st} ~~5th~~ chapter, "And he who sat upon the throne said, "Behold I make all things new." We cannot live in the past, we cannot cling to the past, we must go on. Yet there are some in the church who would have us cling to the things of the past simply because of tradition. Now tradition is fine up to a point. But simply because we have done something a certain way for as long as anyone can remember, does not make it the only way it can be done. Simply because we have always done this, does not make it an unbreakable law of the church. Times change, and the church must change, but more importantly the people in the church must change. We cannot live in past glory, we cannot look back at our record in this church or any other church and say this must be our standard. We must look at the present and the future and accept them as the challenge to change and to meet the new ages and the new times.

We cannot look back and say well we accomplished this and so there are no more goals to aspire to. Rather, we must look at the past as a guage to see where we can improve and to build upon any records or achievements made in the past.

I think Jesus stated this very plainly when he said, "No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God.² What He was really saying was, "Once you have promised to be a follower of mine, you must strive to ever go forward and to improve. You must not look at your past accomplishments and say, 'See what I have done for God,' or, 'Look what our church has done,' but you must instead look at the situation and continue to build upon it and continue to grow and change." This must be the purpose of any church and it must be the purpose of any Christian. To strive to live in the past or to live on the past merits of others will not do. We must continue to grow or we die.

(For New Bloomfield)

Since I have been the Pastor here, I have seen the Duncannon church challenge itself to fulfilling a goal for the OCWM each year, and each year they have met this challenge and exceeded it. In this church I have tried to make the church challenge itself to no avail. The story I hear from so many of the congregation is that there is a fund of money that has been given by one of the departed members, and because of this sum of money, I do not need to give. Use that money to run the church. Now this says nothing to the people who make these remarks, because they cannot see that they owe the Lord a responsibility and regardless of what Miss X left to this church, they should be a strong supporting member of this church.

~~I also hear from the treasurer~~ You have heard it before and you will hear it again and again, that in order to survive we must grow and build. This does not mean that we must keep on adding large numbers of members or putting on additions. But it does mean that we the members of this church must continue to change our attitudes toward the church, and our attitudes about giving and living. If you would like to see two very good examples of what living in the past and upon past performances can do to someone, then let me take you with me someday

to two nearby institutions and you can see first hand a woman who has gone back to being a child and playing with dolls and living in a child's world. Or a retired school teacher who lives in a world of fantasy. This is the danger of living in the past.

(For Both churches)

When we think of the possibilities that exist in the as yet untarnished New Year, our hearts should beat just a little faster and our minds should be turned to the ~~thoughts~~ thoughts of how we can each one grow and change in ~~this new~~ these bright and shiny new days that God will give to us.

(Illustration of boy and cocoon)

Here is a classic example of looking for the obvious and overlooking the beauty that is nearby. It shows a blindness to the possibilities that are to be found in any circumstance.

Possibly you have heard the story of the men building St. Paul's Cathedral in London, which was designed by Christopher Wren the brilliant English architect. Mr. Wren came to the job this one day, and inquired of several workmen who were laying stone what they were doing. The men did not know who he was and could have cared less, so he received appropriate answers from each one. The first man answered, "I'm laying stone." The second man said, "I'm laboring with this stone work can't you see that?" The third man when he was asked replied in glowing terms, "Why, I'm helping to build a beautiful cathedral."

To two of the men it was merely a task, or a job that had to be done. They were merely working because it was necessary to do so to feed themselves and their families. To the third man it was not only a necessity of life, but a labor of love. He could see the beautiful stone columns and pillars rising from nothing, and becoming the beautiful cathedral which it is. He had a vision for the future and could see beyond his pile of stone what would take place. And this is what we

should see as we look at yet another year. We should see not only day upon endless weary day in which to do the necessary things of life, but we should see instead, ~~day~~ hours and seconds, and minutes to be used by each of us for the kingdom of God. Days that are full of many opportunities to tell others of Jesus Christ. Days that can change each one of us and make us the new creatures we should become.

"Those were the ~~Days~~^{Days}", I suppose they were, but they cannot possibly have the challenge and the sense of adventure about them ~~at~~ ^{which} the next 365 present. If you care to live in the "Good Old Days" you may do so. But if kersoene lamps, ^{POOR REGENERATION, WASHING IN THE KITCHEN, BATHING IN KASHIUS,} outside toilets, improper heating, and all of the other discomforts and inconveniences bother you as much as they did the people who made the necessary changes from them, then the new year will be to you a time for change and new creations. May it be indeed in 1973, "Behold the new has come" in the Trinity charge, and may we be able ~~with the~~ to look back upon each year and say, "Yes, those were the good the days, but we can do better this next year."

Shirley & Ralph Charles Link, Nancy Link, Dale with Lianne his wife, Lloyd Link with Karen his wife
 Jessica in front of Ralph C. Link
 Ethan and Alisha in front of R. Dale and Lianne Link (the eldest son & family)









Ralph C. Link
153 Keck Road
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(412) 352-1103

Born: April 9, 1929, Pittsburgh, Pa.
Married: December 15, 1951
Wife: Shirley Margaret Neill
Born: December 8, 1930, Pittsburgh, Pa.

Children: Ralph Dale Link, born May 11, 1955, Pittsburgh, Pa.
Lloyd Alan Link, born May 28, 1958, Pittsburgh, Pa.
Nancy Lynn Link, born March 15, 1961, Butler, Pa.

SCHOOLING:

Graduated from Perry High School, Pittsburgh, Pa.
June 1947

Lay Ministry School, Penn West Conference of United
Church of Christ, September 1965 to May 1969

Commissioned Lay Minister June 1969

Lancaster Theological Seminary, Lancaster, Pa.,
September 1970

Graduated from Lancaster Theological Seminary May 1974

Ordained to Christian Ministry March 10, 1974

PASTORATES:

As Lay Minister: short term, 1 month or less in
various churches 1965 to 1967

Emlenton Lamartine Charge of United Church of Christ
1967 to 1969

Short term in various churches 1970 until Seminary
entrance July 1970

July 1970 to December 1973 Student Pastor at Trinity
Charge, New Bloomfield, Duncannon, Pa., Penn Central
Conference, United Church of Christ

December 1973 to present, St. Paul's United Church of
Christ, Butler, Pa., Penn West Conference, United
Church of Christ

PERSONAL TESTIMONY

OF

Ralph C. Link

I am the youngest of five children. I was born just prior to the onset of the Depression. Our family was very poor. My father was an alcoholic and my mother was a very religious person who was searching for the Lord. During my childhood she did her best to teach me the things of the Lord. Later in life she came to a personal relationship with Him.

I grew up in the Evangelical and Reformed Church where salvation by grace alone was not preached nor taught. I knew all about Jesus, what He did, how He lived, His miracles, His death and resurrection, but I didn't know Him personally.

My life had many ups and downs and all the while I was attending church and striving with my good works to please God. At a very low point in my life when we were deeply in debt and my wife and three children were all ill, I came to the crossroads. I watched a Billy Graham Crusade on television from some distant city and the message he preached seemed to be directed right at me. I wrestled with making that commitment to Christ, but didn't. The next afternoon and evening at work on the 4 to 12 shift I came to the conclusion that I needed to make that commitment to Christ. It seemed like there was no other choice if life was to have any meaning. That night when I came home from work at 1:00 A.M., I laid face down on the living room floor and told God that I couldn't live my life in my own strength and I accepted the gift of salvation from my Savior Jesus Christ. My life has never been the same.

Through several meaningful circumstances I was called by God to serve Him in the Christian Ministry and to help spread that wonderful message of salvation through the shed blood of Jesus Christ. What a wonderful and rewarding time it has been and I give Him all the praise for my salvation and the opportunity to serve Him.

STATEMENT OF FAITH

OF

Ralph C. Link

I believe the Bible, both the Old and New Testaments to be the inspired inerrant Word of God. I believe the Bible is the complete revelation of His will for the salvation of men and it is the final authority for the Christian faith and life.

I believe in one God, who is eternally existent in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

I believe in the Deity of the Lord Jesus Christ that He is true God and true man. I believe that He was born of the Virgin Mary, that He lived in sinless life, that He performed the miracles recorded in Scripture, that He died on the cross as a sacrifice for our sins, that He bodily arose from the dead, that He ascended on high where He is at the right hand of Almighty God as our intercessor.

I believe in the Holy Spirit and that He comes and indwells each believer at the time of conversion. I believe that He lives in each believer to lead, to instruct, and to convict so that a believer may live a more godly life.

I believe that through the shed blood of Jesus Christ and through His resurrection, this is the only ground for justification and salvation for all who receive Him. A Lord and Savior and to such as receive Him, they are born of the Holy Spirit and become children of God.

I believe water baptism and the Lord's Supper are ordinances of the Church but are not means of salvation.

I believe in the personal and premillennial and imminent coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

I believe in the resurrection of the dead, for the believer to resurrection of life and joy with the Lord, for the unbeliever to resurrection of judgement and everlasting punishment.